



Union Baptist Church of Cincinnati
405 West Seventh Street
Cincinnati, OH 45203
(513) 381-3858
www.union-baptist.net
Rev. Dr. Orlando Yates, Pastor

THE CHURCH AND THE GOSPEL

“To those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 1:2)

The thing that all the New Testament books are consciously about is the work of God in Christ. New Testament teaching is kerygmatic, in the sense of being, first to last, exposition and application of the gospel of redeeming love. The doctrine of the church belongs as part of this exposition.

This reflects ultimately the God-centeredness of the Bible. If we view the Bible from the standpoint of its narrative, as a *drama*, we have to acknowledge the Triune God as author, producer, and chief performer. Or, if we see the Bible as a *message*, “God’s Word written,” we have to recognize God himself as its source, subject, and actual speaker. The Bible is about God – the Creator redeeming. And when it shows us the church, the substance of what it is showing us is God’s work of redemption – particularly, what older divines called the *applying* of redemption.

To study the Christian life – calling, justification, sanctification conflict, preservation, glorification – is to study the applying of redemption to individuals. To study the church – its nature, notes, life, ministry, sacraments – is to study the same subject in its corporate aspect. The doctrine of the church is part of the doctrine of grace. Had Paul been asked the theme of his “church epistles” Colossians and Ephesians – or, for that matter, Romans and Galatians, which have as good a claim to be called “church epistles” – he would certainly have said: the Grace of God in Christ.

Church should be defined as the family community of those redeemed, called, and united to God – in other words, the church is defined in terms of the gospel, and its nature and life should be analyzed in entire correlation to the work of God in grace as the New Testament sets forth. AMEN.

~Dr. J.I. Packer

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:18 – 20

